

Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Enhanced Role Registered Nurse (ERRN)

Historically, registered nurses have been the primary providers of STD clinical services in most North Carolina local health departments. However, in the early 1990's, a statewide shortage of adequately trained nurses to provide these services prompted a series of focus groups. Working with its partners, the Division of Public Health and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) established the first STD ERRN Course in 1994. As a result, this collaborative educational initiative helps to assure accessibility and availability of STD services throughout North Carolina. By standardizing the training of registered nurses and by following the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Guidelines, the North Carolina Public Health System can offer high quality, appropriate care in every county within the state. When integrated with community prevention and detection programs, better care means better disease control. Offered through the UNC-CH Office of Continuing Education (OCE), the course combines online lectures with a supervised clinical practicum.

The Communicable Disease Branch agreement addenda require local health departments to assure that STD ERRN Training is completed by all registered nurses who provide clinical assessment and management of clients with STD concerns. Local health departments must arrange for an approved preceptor and assure that standing orders for practice are in place to support the registered nurse in this role.

The skill/proficiency level of STD ERRNs must be maintained by clinical practice allowing 100 STD exams per year and a minimum of 10 hours of relevant STD clinical continuing education every year. If practice hour requirements cannot be met, the registered nurse must complete a two-day or three-day STD experiential training provided through the Alabama-North Carolina STD Prevention Training Center.

For more information: <http://www.sph.unc.edu/nciph/>